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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to assist adult educators whose job it is to teach English as a second language (ESL) to adult learners. The first several sections discuss the characteristics of students likely to be enrolled in ESL classes; the qualities that a teacher needs to be able to relate successfully to adult ESL students; and procedures for teachers to use in assessing their own attitudes, strengths, and weaknesses. The following aspects of beginning a program are examined next: initial planning, publicity, registration, assessment, student placement, steps in formulating objectives, instructional materials, evaluation of instructional methods, postassessment, and final formulation of class goals and student objectives. Three levels of program objectives are provided along with tips on planning lessons and charts to aid in placing students correctly. A sample outline for a unit on housing and its components is included. Presented next are agendas and session outlines for monthly (September through March) inservice session on teaching an ESL class for adults. Topics covered in the sessions include how language is learned, problems encountered when starting an ESL program, attendance problems and remedies, reading instruction, the block teaching method, writing instruction, and effective learning activities. (MN)

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ACTION PLAN
FOR ESL TEACHERS

Written
by
Janice M. Waddy

Developed for and Funded by the

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

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DEDICATION

To Mary, Jennifer and Susan
with thanks and love.

Jan

This project is a result of years of frustration coupled with questions posed by a group of inquisitive and dedicated teachers whose primary aim is to help people survive and blossom in a foreign culture.

Because of the multi-cultural, multi-lingual group we serve, the need for a special kind of guidance was germaine. Teachers
felt they needed to have direction, assurance and feedback regarding the effectiveness of instruction. Without these ingredients, they felt it was the student who would suffer most.

Another factor which prompted the proposal for this project was the fact that the teachers were in their own eyesights, "amateurs". Although there were some very good guides available (the most helpful for us being the Graham/ Walsh Guide), teachers felt they needed "on the job training" from someone who was familiar with and had already dealt with the frustrations and questions they now had.

This guide is different in that it puts the plan into motion with the inservices and "on the job training" that the teachers requested. It was a tremendous boon for the teachers and it will continue to serve them well in years to come.

Hopefully there are others who will find this particular kind of information useful and enjoyable, but most of all effective.

Our thanks to the Texas Education Agency for this opportunity.

J. M. Waddy

TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TO ADULTS

This guide is especially written with the students and teachers of the Adult Learning Center in Schertz, Texas in mind, but it can be applicable or adaptable to any adult teaching situation.

THE STUDENTS:

The students who come to the center come from various countries and backgrounds. There are refugees, military dependents of both native and foreign military personnel, and descendents of immigrants who have settled in this area of Texas.

They come to the English as a Second Language classroom for many different reasons. Some come because they need to learn how to survive in a new and strange country; others come for social reasons or because they want to "belong"; and still others come because they are here temporarily and need to communicate to get along in this country while they're here.

BEFORE YOU TEACH

There are some things every good teacher needs to consider before beginning to teach. Some time should be spent thinking about what it is you're about to do. Ask yourself some questions. Spend some time wondering about your students. You might even write down your thoughts in your planning book. (For more information on what students bring to a class, see Inservice I, "How do we learn language?")

THE TEACHER

Very often in life, we ask ourselves (or we should).... "WHY AM I DOING THIS?" When you stop to consider the fact that teachers have the capacitiy to influence the very lives of their students, don't you think this is THE most important question a teacher can ask him/herself? Maybe we need to question our motives with far more regularity than we do.

Other questions that are pertinent to the ESL teacher should include an examination of attitudes:

Can my students relate to me?

Do I have hidden biases? (God forbid, do I have explicit biases?) If so, how do I deal with them?

Am I sensitive to other people?

Am I able to empathize?

Am I patient?

What are my expectations of myself and my students?

What expectations do my students have?

Am I prepared to teach this class?

All of these questions, except perhaps the last, deal with personality. Not too much has been said in the past about what a teacher brings to the classroom. A lot has been said about student characteristics. We know about learning disabilities of students; we know about psychological factors that affect learning. We know inside and out about learning from the angle of the student. Maybe it's time to start looking more closely at other factors as well. Knowing what you're all about will help you to understand what it is you're trying to do.

Some of the questions written above are self-explanatory, but if you you begin to think about them long enough, you might find yourself discovering some things about the INNER you, particularly if you're writing these things down. Try it. It's relatively painless.

Let's skip down to the question that asks about expectations. In short, these are the goals that you AND your students set. We've all seen programs where the teacher charges in like Attila the Hun and declares what's going to happen in the class for the next twenty weeks. A little common sense is all it takes to include student expectations along with yours to formulate the goals for the class. So, how do you get student input to help set the goals for the class? Does it have any connection with how well you're prepared to teach the class? The logical answer is YES.

Let's say you've spent some time talking with the student or with his/her translator during registration. (Informal interviews, by the way, are a good method of getting student input for determining goals.) What is most important for this particular student is that he get a job to support his family. He's new to the country, but in his former country he was a professional businessman.

To further complicate matters, let's suppose a second student comes in to register. She is the new wife of an enlisted man in the military. In her country, she completed the third grade. Her knowledge of the spoken native language is average, but her reading and writing skills are limited in her native language and non-existent in English. She speaks enough broken English to let you know that she really wants to learn English well enough to make her husband proud of her and to be able to help any children they may have in the future. She is also eager to learn the

ways of this new country and its people. She hopes one day to become an American citizen.

Compound these two examples with approximately ten to twenty others that may or may not be similar and you've got the general makeup of the class. Just short of pulling out your hair, what can you possibly do to consider each individual's goal and at the same time hope to accomplish something productive for the students as a group? Are you beginning to think that maybe it would be better to approach the class just like Attila the Hun, declare you're going to teach such and such and whoever doesn't like it can go somewhere else?

There's a Chinese proverb that goes like this... "A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step."

This kind of teaching situation is not new, and it's not uncommon. With the influx of immigrants to this country and with the mobility of society in the U.S., not to mention second generations, children of immigrants, who find that they are lacking in English skills, we can expect to see more and more this kind of situation in adult education programs.

Though it might seem an easy task, teaching Adult ESL is a complex matter. It requires a special kind of person with a special kind of patience. Knowing one foreign language would not be beneficial in a classroom where eleven to fifteen different languages are representative of the class makeup. As a matter of fact, knowing one foreign language may even be detrimental in a multi-lingual class if the teacher should choose to use that language to help some students at the expense of the others. However, what <u>is</u> important is knowing how you learned that foreign language, because it helps you to empathize with your students. You will have experienced some of the things your students are about to experience. It allows room for sensitivity to others. You can set the standard in the class that will allow patience and sensitivity among the students themselves. In fact, this is a good place to begin.

Every student in the class will have something in common. They all want to learn to communicate in English. Isn't it wiser to put these commonalities to work for you?

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Putting your heads together:

Any program is as good or as poor as the people who run it. Some sense of where the program is headed and what the overall goals for the program are should be a primary step in getting the program started. If this isn't happening, if you're uncertain of what the goals are or where it is you're intending to go with the program, it becomes automatically programmed for failure. The director should plan together with the teachers and staff to afford a sense of unity and commitment.

Visits to other sites give an estimation of what other people are doing in the field. Attendence at conferences and inservices will keep you abreast of what's new in the field. Retaining membership in professional organizations and availing yourself to professional literature can only enhance classroom effectiveness.

Publicity :

The next step in getting started is to publicize. Brochures, posters, flyers, newspaper articles, visits to local businesses, churches and organizations can put your program within reach of the people you wish to serve.

Registration

The procedures for registering may vary from program to program, but the important thing is to offer something at the registration that will make the student feel that s/he is important and that someone is really concerned about him/her. PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL. Many students are lost to the program on the day of registration because they become intimidated by insurmountable odds. Put yourself in the place of the student. Physically go through the process of registering, asking yourself questions about the complexity of the overall process. When a student comes to the location, does s/he know exactly where to go? Appropriately placed signs can eliminate doubt about where a student must go to register. Once a prospective student finds the place, are there signs designating the various programs available?

When the new student walks through that door, s/he has already made an enormously courageous step toward self-improvement. Don't blow his/her chances for succeeding right from the start. Be supportive. Greet the prospective student politely, PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT S/HE WANTS, explain the procedures of registration slowly and carefully, allow time for questions to be asked and answered, be supportive, offer assistance if it's needed. In short, Be SUPPORTIVE.

If being supportive seems a bit over emphasized here, it's because it is of prime importance that prospective students feel that they can indeed get the help they need here. How often have you seen a stack of completed registration forms discarded because people registered but never showed up for the class? Perhaps circumstances beyond their control prevented them from going to class, but perhaps, and more probable, they felt too intimidated to return. There has been little research on why people decide against taking that second step, perhaps the biggest step of all.

How much should a student be asked to do at the time of registration? That depends on the student and the program's time parameters. Perhaps filling out the information sheet will be all that some students can handle, perhaps others

will be able to complete the whole gamut of informal interview and assessment as well. A good listening ear, observant eyes and gut feelings should indicate what a student can handle at one time. Unfortunately, if the program is set up so that exceptions cannot be made then the prospective student will have to complete the whole array of procedures. These are things that must be ironed out in the planning session before registration actually begins. Again it's imperative to be supportive by allowing all the time a student needs to complete whatever is necessary. Allow time for a brief informal oral conference. If at all possible, this should be done by the teacher that the student is likely to have or by a trained interviewer who can give concisive information about the student. Another good idea is to have student representatives present at the registration. First timers seem to feel more at ease when they realize an atmosphere of friendliness and helpfulness; the right kind of student representative will definitely help provide this. As a matter of fact, properly trained students and former students make excellent interviewers because they can empathize with new comers to the program.

Assessment

Once the student has completed the registration form, the next step is to get some indication of where that student should be placed. A lot of different things should go into determining which class is best suited to a particular person's needs. Of course the student will already have some idea of where s/he belongs. Typically though, students underestimate their own knowledge and skills. The key factor here is to make recommendations to the student based on different variables: the informal interview, the brief individual conference (paying close attention to student input), and the assessment. The ultimate choice is the student's.

Considerable thought and research has gone into student assessment. It would seem plausible that some form of assessment is needed to help insure proper placement of each student. However, care must be taken to ensure that the prospective student is not overwhelmed by the testing process. If a person is having difficulty at the beginning of the test, chances are s/he is going to become more and more frustrated with the test, the program and him/herself

Careful observation and stopping the student before the frustration level is reached can serve to eliminate disparagement. When a person stands and tears up the test and the registration form, you're probably too late to do anything constructive to help that student.

Spend some time reviewing published tests to determine which one(s) will be most suitable for your purposes. Tests are available for previewing at any local university curriculum center.

This site will use the HELP (Hendersen/Moriarity English Language Proficiency Test) for beginners and the John Test for more advanced students in conjunction with the Walsh informal interview and a ten to fifteen minute informal conference with the instructor or a trained interviewer.

Levelling off:

Now that the student has been interviewed and has taken the necessary assessment, how do you determine which class to put him/her in? Most published tests provide information for placement, but it really isn't enough. Information from the tests should be used along with other criteria mentioned above to place a student in a particular class. (If a student falls somewhere between levels 1 and 2, it might be better to place that student in level 1 at the beginning. Psychologically, it's easier for a student to be "promoted" than "demoted".) By all means if the student feels that s/he is ready for the next level, let him/her try it temporarily with the knowledge that s/he can return to the original level if s/he is not satisfied.

A common practice is to have three levels, but that can be misleading at times because a student may be at varying levels. That is, a student may be at one level in reading and at another level in speaking.

The key here is flexibility. Being able to recognize where the student will be able to achieve the highest success and the greatest challenge in emotional comfort is of utmost importance.

Level 1

For our purposes, a student who has very little command of the English language, who may or may not know how to read and write in his/her first language and who cannot function alone in English.

Level II

A student will be placed in level II if s/he is able to communicate in a limited way his/her wants and needs in English (and perhaps with smatterings of his/her natve language), has some knowledge of reading and writing both in the first language and in English and can function to some extent in the community in English.

Level III

A student will be placed in level III if s/he is able to communicate effectively in English, but perhaps needs a wider vocabulary or improved reading and writing skills to achieve upward mobility or greater satisfaction. This is the polishing stage. This level is perhaps designed for

those students who want to continue their education at the college level or vocational training.

See chart for placement.

Getting started

Now that registration is over and all the information sheets are at your disposal, it's time to start considering specifically what will happen in your class. Good teachers have a wonderful knack for daydreaming. Sometimes it's hard to concentrate on material that you're reading because your mind starts to wander as you begin to think about how this information you're reading is going to work in your class room. Movies, pictures and everyday experiences can have the same effect. They spark ideas. If teachers had a dime (well, maybe a dollar) for all the ideas they've thought of using in a classroom, no one would have to worry about equitable teacher pay. The point is, more often than not, these marvelous ideas are never tried in the classroom because they're too quickly forgotten. We don't write them down. We think about them momentarily and sometimes the idea comes back to us once or twice, but we don't usually act on them. A helpful practice, is to keep notebooks or notecards in strategic places. Spend some time thinking about where you are when you get those super ideas. Is it when you're lying in bed, or in the bathroom, or on the street or all of the above? Then have writing implements and paper in these places to jot these ideas down. Go to those places that spark ideas when you need ideas. In a few weeks time, you'll have accumulated testable ideas that may have the potential of changing the course of a human life. THINK ABOUT IT. A GOOD TEACHER IS A DAYDREAMER. Victor Hugo wrote: " There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world: and that is an idea whose time has come." Let's go a step farther and look at what Hector Berliox said: "Every composer knows the anguish and despair occasioned by forgetting ideas which one has not had time to write down." And still one more step by the author: "What good is an idea if it dies on paper from lack of nourishment and exercise?" Don't stop with writing down the ideas share them, get feedback from colleagues and try them out in your classes. You won't know how effective they are until they're tried and retried and revised and retried and on and on.

Getting back to where we were some consideration of the types of people you have in the class will influence the way you teach. The basic aim of course, is to help students achieve English communication skills listening, speaking, reading and writing to the best of their ability.

The fundamental objectives of a curriculum in ESL then, is twofold: first, to develop an ability to communicate and

second, to provide an exchange of insights into cultural patterns and social values.

Considering these objectives and the types of students in the class will help determine the appropriate approach to teaching that is right for you and for your students. There are numerous methods that can be used to teach ESL and there is no one best method to use. The key factor here is to have a plan based on knowledge of yourself and your students and on methods that are available. In short, have a reason for doing what you're doing in the classroom. For example, let's suppose you want to teach ten new vocabulary words on the first night of class. You may choose Gattegno's Silent Way or Asher's Total Physical Response or Krashen's Natural Approach, but if you're not familiar with any of these approaches, then you need to go back to the drawing board and start reading about current approaches to teaching ESL OR at least you should take advantage of the numerous workshops available that will give you ideas on how these methods work.

Some questions with which you should concern yourself when choosing an approach to a specific lesson:

Does this make sense to me?

Is it suitable? Does it have purpose?

Are the students ready for this particular lesson?

Do I have enough examples to make the lesson clear?

Have I made allowances for slower learners?

Are enough practice activities included?

Is a summary provided at the end of the lesson?

Is an outside assignment necessary?

Is this the best method for linguistic development and cultural appreciation?

Materials

What you select in the way of materials is of just as much importance as is the method of presenting that material. Sometimes the textbooks are already selected for you and you must adapt them to your and the students' needs. Sometimes though, a committee of teachers selects the text to be used. One thought to keep in mind is the purpose for using the text. Does it do much good to select a book based on appearances only? Selection of materials should be based on three major criteria: practicality, productivity and progressiveness.

Is it practical?

Is it timely? Is this what the students need now? Is it based on functionality. Is there immediate utility? Does it explore and expose students to a wide variety of socio-cultural patterns or experiences? Does it promote speech output?

Is it productive?

Does the material for the most part allow for participation by the students? Would it be applicable in appealing to as many senses as possible or is it possible to adapt it accordingly? Does it afford a multiplicity of situations? (Are various aspects of other areas included; math,science,social studies,etc.?)

Is it progressive?

Is the material presented in the book logically progressive? Are the language patterns in the text focused on meaning rather than just on form and function? Will it lead to production outside the class as quickly as possible? Will the students be able to see progress over a short period of time?

Post assessment:

Assessments will be used to partially determine mastery of given units/segments taught. After a student has successfully completed a given level, s/he will be encouraged to try the next level if time permits. Again the final decision is ultimately the student's.

Perhaps this is a good time to mention Benjamin Bloom's "Mastery Learning" concept. Briefly it is a process wherein teacher and students help other students achieve mastery of a given unit so that the majority of the class moves ahead at the same pace. When a student doesn't fully understand a given unit, s/he is paired with a student who does understand. Peer tutoring takes place either in the class or outside the class. A comparable test is given after a set period of time and when the majority of the students have mastered whatever is being taught, then the whole class moves forward with more special attention given when it is needed.

Establishing Goals

Now then, what do we expect from the students? At the very beginning of the class, it is imperative to set up ground rules for the class. In so doing, students come to recognize the seriousness of this undertaking; they take a share in the responsibility of class functions and they take

pride in being a part of a well organized class. Established goals and rules for the class----remembering that rules and goals should be flexible enough to accomodate the specific needs of each individual in the class--- is a must. You might want to set up standards for keeping a student on roll. You might want to stress promptness or having the necessary equipment in class or the importance of doing homework. Whatever you and the students feel is important to the progress of the class should be shared with the class at the beginning. You may also feel the need to reemphasize the goals, rules, etc. at intervals throughout the course. Too, it seems a good idea to evaluate these same goals, etc. and progress achieved under them at the end of the course. Honest student evaluations are good indicators of what was effective in the course.

Class Objectives

General objectives should be broad enough to encompass a spectrum of student needs and capacities. More specific objectives should be included in lesson planning.

Note that in all of the objectives below care must be taken to incorporate listening, speaking, reading and writing skills as well as a sharing of cultural ideas and perspectives in each segment of each level.

For all practical purposes, each site will have to determine the objectives based on a variety of factors. Time, need, and capability of students are but a few.

The objectives below were agreed upon for an estimated total of 130 classroom hours.

Level I Objectives

To have students gain knowledge and practice in application of the following:

Introductions
Greetings and leave takings
Body parts
Clothing
Housing and its components
  Rooms, furniture, etc.
  Tools and utensils, appliances, etc.
Counting/ Measuring
  Giving and receiving change
  Sizes
Colors
Reading signs
Emergency preparedness
Reading directions
Using the telephone
Shopping
  Grocery, catalog, dept. store, etc.
Jobs/occupations
Laws and government
  Military/Civilian
Celebrations
Community living and facilities
  Military/Civilian
Others (as the need arises or as students dictate)
Increased vocabulary
Practice in speaking
  Dialogues, role playing, reading and discussing
Practice in writing
  Alphabets, words, initials, simple sentences
Practice in reading
  Signs, student writing, teacher writing, printed materials
Practice in listening
Exchange of cultural ideas

Level II

Review of level I objectives
Increased vocabulary
Paying bills
Writing checks
Vocational/Avocational
  Want ads, job applications, interviews, leisure time activities
Community involvement and citizenship
Health and nutrition
Making/breaking appointments
Invitations

Responses
Ceremonies and celebrations
Consumer economics
Maintenance agreements, warranties and guarantees, etc.
Following directions
Laws and government
Traffic tickets, driver safety, etc.
Jury duty, court system, etc.
Local,state and federal goverment
Others (as the need arises or as students dictate)
Practice in listening
Effective listening skills

Practice in Reading
Incorporate reading with all of the objectives using dialogues, short narrative passages, drections and recipes,etc. Include text readings, student compositions, teacher compositions, newspaper and magazine articles,etc. Exposure to diferent styles, types and purposes of writing: narrative, poetry, expository, etc.

Practice in Writing
Incorporate writing with all of the objectives mentioned above. Students should now be able to put sentences together into well formed dialogues and paragraphs. Level II students should be able to keep a journal and write letters as well as recognize the different kinds of writing.

Practice in Speaking
- Dialogues, role play, free conversations

Exchange of cultural ideas
Incorporated in all of the above

Level III

Review of levels I & II
Increased vocabulary
Applications: job, college and university admission, scholarship,etc.
Study skills
Consumer economics
Renting, budgeting, buying a car, etc.
Health and First Aid
Occupational development
Practice in Listening
Practice in Reading
A wider variety of reading materials (students shoud be able to read basically the same kinds of materials that the average native speaker reads.)

Practice in Writing
  Writing for a specific audience. Different genres, registers, etc. in writing. Different kinds of writing. (Comparison/contrast, informative, narrative, poetic, etc.)

Practice in Speaking
  Conversations
  Expressing opinions
  Informative speaking (extended conversations based on knowledge from reading, listening, etc.)

Exchange of Cultural ideas and perceptions by incorporation.

Planning the Lesson
  Of utmost importance is having some idea of how you're going to approach a specific lesson. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DO A THOROUGH JOB IN THE CLASSROOM WITHOUT ADEQUATE PLANNING. Although it isn't imperative to write down every little detail that you think of in your lesson plan, it is necessary to outline the procedures and objectives you hope to accomplish with that particular plan. A sample lesson plan from a unit on Housing and its Components is given below to be used for Level I.

Unit: Housing and its Components

Lesson 1: Outside the House

Objectives:

1. To teach students vocabulary that deals with things that are outside (as opposed to inside) a house.
2. To have students try to hear, recognize, pronounce, read and write these words in an appropriate context.
3. To have students put these words into sentences of their own.

Materials needed: Pictures of a house (and houses for comparison) with back yards, front yards, fences, driveways, sidewalks,etc.

Procedure: Let the students know what you'll be talking about during this class period. Put the words "outside" and "inside" on the chalkboard. Explain the difference (using TPR) between outside and inside. Start by going outside the room. Tell them, "I'm going OUTSIDE". Stay outside for a few seconds, then say, "I'm coming INSIDE now." Next have a student go outside and come back inside, then have a student or a few students tell classmate(s) to go outside and come back inside. Give enough examples so that students fully understand the concept of outside and inside.

Pass pictures of a house and its surroundings to the class. Introduce vocabulary by using numbers that coincide with items on the picture. (Ex. 1. fence, 2. sidewalk, 3. grass, etc.) Put the vocabulary words on the chalkboard. Have students write them on thier pictures next to the appropriate numbers.

Divide class into groups of three or more depending on the number of students and pictures you have. Give each group a different picture of a house and its surroundings. Ask them to name the things that are outside the house in their pictures. Sample sentences can be put on the board.

There is a car outside the house.

There are children playing outside in the back yard.

Divide the chalkboard into as many segments as there are groups and number them accordingly. As the individual groups produce sentences, write them on the chalkboard or if time permits, have the students write their sentences on the board under their respective group number. Collect the pictures from the groups and mix them up. Now ask students to use the sentences that were given by the groups to decide which picture fits with that group's sentences.

Assignment: Ask students to make as many sentences as they can using things that are outside their own homes for the next class period.

Comments: (Here, write in your thoughts on how this lesson was perceived by you and your students. Are there any recommended changes? Did the students seem to respond positively to the lesson? Why ? Would you add anything to this plan?)

WALSH ESL PLACEMENT
(Revised)

Oral Assessment

If the student responds correctly circle "2". For an incomplete answer circle "1" and for no answer "0".

BEGINNING LEVEL	1. What is your name?	0	1	2
	2. Where do you live?	0	1	2
	3. Are you married?	0	1	2
	4. Do you have any children?	0	1	2
	5. Where were you born?	0	1	2
INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	6. What day is today?	0	1	2
	7. Do you work?	0	1	2
	8. How long have you lived in the U.S.?	0	1	2
	9. How long have you lived in Texas?	0	1	2
	10. What do you need the most help in? Speaking, reading, writing (Circle tha appropriate item)	0	1	2
ADVANCED LEVEL	11. How did you learn about this program?	0	1	2
	12. What do you like to do for fun?	0	1	2
	13. Tell me what you like about the U.S.	0	1	2

Literacy Assessment

1. Write your name _____
2. Write your address _____
3. Are you married? _____
4. What day is today? _____
5. What kind of work do you enjoy doing? _____

_____

6. How long have you lived in your present neighborhood?

_____

7. Have you studied English before? _____

Where? _____

For how long? _____

8. How long do you plan to stay in Texas? _____
9. What language(s) do you speak?

_____

ESL PLACEMENT CHART

	Walsh Oral/Literacy Assessment (Revised)		HELP	
	Oral	Literacy	oral	written
Beginning	0 - 10	0 - 4	0 - 10	0 - 4
Intermediate	11 - 20	6 - 10	11 - 25	5 - 10
Advanced		12 - 20	JOHN (Revised) TEST Part I 26 or above Part II 15 or above	

THE PLAN IN MOTION

Our site consists of four teachers and two aides in the ESL Department. The first meeting was held about a month and a half before classes were scheduled to begin. We met for approximately four hours and thirty minutes, first providing educational background for the teachers and then making decisions among ourselves. These decisions included determining the objectives of the program, registration and testing, dates and topics for future inservices and the commitment to hold monthly meetings to discuss progress, problems, etc.

The following is the educational portion of the first inservice.

Inservice

How do we learn language?

The purpose of this particular inservice is to provide teachers with insight needed to teach students to communicate in English as their second language. If teachers have fundamental concepts of what a student brings to a class and what a teacher brings to a class, then it stands to reason that the class will be better when these things are considered throughout the course of the program.

Agenda:

6:00 Sign in/Name tags
If there are new teachers, a few minutes will be spent on introductions.

6:20 Discussion of personal goals for this class.
- Have teahcers briefly write on paper that has been provided, a list of personal goals they to accomplish this year. Then have each teacher read what s/he has written. Invite comments from the rest of the group.

6:50 Now that we've talked about your personal goals for this year, let's talk about the overall goals for the program. Perhaps if we can look at them together, we can come to some agreements as to how they can best be achieved. Before we get started there are a few activities I'd like for us to do.

Activity 1

(Talk for a few minutes in (a) language(s) other than English.) Ask different questions to each person in the same language or in a different

language. Wait a few minutes for a response to your question, but don't let the speaker finish the response before going on to the next person with the next question.

Sample questions:

Comment allez-vous?
Dites en francais: Ou allez-vous?
Repondez en francais: Etes-vous Americain?
Que faites-vous?
Que faite-vous le samedi?
Qu'est-ce que vous avez fait pendant les vacances?

Ask teachers to explore and share their feelings. Allow time for discussion.
Does this activity tell you something about your students? Write down the responses on the chalkboard.

Possible answers:

New students to the program feel

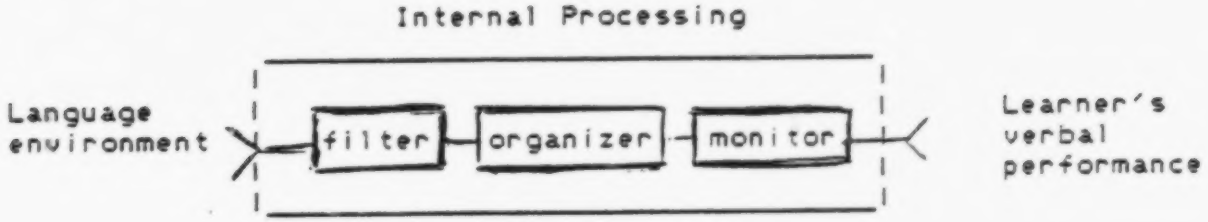
threatened
overwhelmed
inadequate
sometimes stupid
that English is impossible to learn
embarrassed when singled out to speak

7:20 Let's find out some possible reasons why students feel intimidated in an ESL classroom. (Handout)

According to the research done by professionals in the field, the implications for teachers are apparent.
First, there are certain characteristics (based on research done by Burt and Dulay as well as Krashen that form the basis for teaching suggestions.)

1. There seem to be innate learning processors that apparently guide second language acquisition.

OVERHEAD
OR
SKETCH ON CHALKBOARD



2. In order for the natural processors to work, exposure to natural communication in English is necessary. The more s/he is exposed to the language as it is naturally communicated, the faster the student is likely to learn the target language.

3. If learners are to comprehend the content of natural communication in the target language, they're going to need a lot of "here-and-now" topics (concrete referents). Consider how children learn language.

4. A silent phase at the beginning of language learning (when the student is not required to produce the new language) has proven useful for most students. Students will usually start to produce the new language when they feel comfortable doing so.

5. A student's emotions,motives and attitudes have a tendency to screen what is presented in as well as outside the classroom. This affective screening is a highly individual thing and results in different learning rates and different learning results.

6. The learner's first language influences pronunciation of the new language, but has little affect on grammar. Adults more often fall back on their first language.

7. Some basic errors are predictable.

8. There is a place for the conscious learning of grammatical rules, but its purpose is quite different from the subconscious learning for native-like fluency.

9. Relaxed and self-confident learners learn faster.

10. Certain differences between adults and children can and do affect language acquisition.

11. Students seem to learn most from their peers and from people with whom they identify.

12. Correcting grammatical does NOT guarantee that students will avoid them.

13. Exposing students to a specific structure does not gurantee that the s/he will learn it. Student acquire a structure only when they are mentally ready for it.

8:10 Question and answer period.

8:20 So now, what are the implications for us as teachers?

As teachers we should strive to

1. Give the student as much exposure to natural communication as we possibly can. The focus should be on the message rather than on the linguistic form of that message.

. In the classroom

Focus should be on real conversations. Ask real questions rather than stilted and artificial ones that is of no interest to you or the student.

Consider how a native speaker would answer questions or make comments. There are times when one word answers are acceptable. (If you're trying to get students to respond in complete statements, then construct questions that naturally require full sentences. (What happened to your foot?) (Why didn't you come to class Tuesday?)

Avoid correction of pronunciuation and grammatical errors when the student is trying to communicate. Accept nonverbal communication just as you would in a native speaker. If a student nods his/her head it signifies that s/he understands, but perhaps isn't ready to produce the language yet. Avoid grammar lessons during communication activities.

Provide situations wherein students can interact with native speakers.

2. Incorporate a silent phase at the beginning of the course. Students are likely to feel intimidated if they are forced to speak before

they're ready. Allow them to repond through use of their native language, through physical activities or with short answers.

. In the classroom

Don't rush the students. (This perhaps is one of the hardest things for teachers to do.) Allow several weeks at the beginning of the course for students to listen to this new language before they began trying to produce it. Of course, if there are are students who want to try speaking, accept and acknowledge their responses.

* Asher's Total Physical Response, Gattegno's Silent Way and Terrell's Natural Approach are good methods to use in the beginning stages of language learning.

3. Use concrete referents. Try to involve the use of as many senses as possible, especially during the beginning stages of language learning.

. In the classroom

Demonstrate what you're talking about with objects that students can touch, see, smell, etc. Include activities that are interesting and will spark curiosity.

4. Devise special activities and techniques that relax students and protect their egos.

. In the classroom

Try to put the students at ease by not singling out students to respond to questions in the beginning.

Include breathing exercises if students seem unduly tense.

Don't focus on errors, but on content.

5. Spend some time on formal grammar lessons. Some adults feel they need rules in order to feel secure in the language. Some can apply simple grammatical rules in their production of the target language.

. In the classroom

The amount of time spent on grammar lesson should be minimal compared to the rest of the lesson. Make certain that students understand the focus is on grammar rather than communication. Focus should be on low-level easy rules rather than complex ones.

6. Learn what motivates your students and use that knowledge in the classroom. Getting to know your students is advantageous for determining what and how you're going to teach as well as learning which students work well together.

. In the classroom

Be aware of the variety of language the students hear from their peers and others. Keep in mind that peer pressure plays a large part in learning.

Accept speech that is different from what you hope the students will learn if this is what the students hear outside the class. (Eventually, students will come to realize the difference in their speech as they listen to the teacher and classmates speak. The student usually will decide what the appropriate next step should be.)

Teach the appropriateness of language. (A different kind of language is used for job interviews than is used for a conversation with a friend or neighbor.

7. Create a non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom. Students should not be embarrassed by their errors.

. In the classroom

Expect errors. Don't focus on the errors that students make when trying to commmunicate.

Devise questions that will elicit short responses at the beginning of the course. Questions to which the whole group can respond are also useful at the beginning of the program.

Be patient with students. Encourage students to be patient with each other. Discourage impatience and particularly uncharitable laughter at errors.

8. Incorporate current and socially useful dialogues in your curriculum.

   . In the classroom

   Getting to know the students will provide insight into their interests. Use these intersts and observations of social interactions to devise classroom activites.

   Develop dialogues around stock phrases, common situations and exchanges of interest to your students.

9. Match your expectations with student ability. Certain structures are learned before others. Don't expect students to learn everything to which they are exposed.

   . In the classroom

   Be aware that research has shown that there seems to be a general learning order for English structures. You can expose students to a variety of structures in your speech, but you should not expect these structures to be mastered immediately.

   It isn't necessary to teach to a learning order, but familiarity with that order is helpful in understanding student learning patterns as well as affording a sense of what your expectations should be.

10. Avoid reference to student's first language when teaching the target language. Successful second language learners keep the languages distinct from one another. Teachers should strive to do the same.

   . In the classroom

   Translation tasks should be avoided as a major technique in the classroom. It should be used only to clarify meaning.

   When you're teaching grammatical structures avoid contrasting the student's native

language with the target language.

Questions that came from this inservice:

How much can we expect a student to learn from one class period to the next. You keep saying, "Don't go too fast?" I keep wondering if we're going to slowly. How do you determine that?

* I think the students determine that, don't you? The students will let you know by their responses whether they understand what has been given or not. If they don't understand, then you need to give more supplemental material and more practice.

Well, suppose you have a few students who grasp the lesson planned for that day and a few who don't understand at all. What do you do then? There are always those students who are slower than the others. You said earlier, "Don't expect the students to learn everything to which they are exposed." Do we just ignore them and go on with the next lesson or what?

* I believe there are times whne you should ignore students, or at least pretend to ignore them, but this isn't one of those times. You're right, there are students who are slower than others in some areas at some times. I think using the faster students to help out in the classroom is a good idea. It does two things. It serves as a teaching tool for those students who need more practice and it serves as reinforcement for those students who have acquired that particular piece of language skill. There are fringe benefits inherent in this kind of peer tutoring. There will be different areas of weakness for different students at different times. You won't always have the same students who lack knowledge in a given area. The students helping and those being helped will vary from time to time. Can you see the advantages to that. Each student will have a sense of worth and lots of practice in patience as the year progresses.

Another thing you're going to learn is which students work well together. This helps you to keep in focus that you're teaching unique individuals and you need to consider that every time you walk into that classroom.

There's something to be said here too, about what teachers do to slower students. Some teachers have the wonderful knack of devoting time and attention to those students who will supply the answers to questions quickly. We've all seen it. Student A, a slower student, is asked a question. S/he cannot respond quickly, because s/he needs a little more time to think about both question and answer. Teacher can't wait, so Student B is given the same question. Student B, who already knows the answer, blurts it out in no time at all. How do you think Student A feels?

It is the slower student who needs the attention, but many teachers teach to the more advanced student. I think we should strive to hit a happy medium. Don't lose your slower students; use your faster students to help the slower ones keep up.

Can we call you if we're having problems?

* By all means. I'll be glad to address any problems you're having. I won't promise to have all the answers, but I will promise to try. Too, I'll expect to hear what you've done in the way of solving a given problem before I give any suggestions. I also want you to realize that just because I've given you suggestions, there's no guarantee that your problem is solved. I think solutions to problems lie in several different things, the prime thing being the problem itself. Sometimes there will be no answers, at least no workable answers to problems you'll be facing, but I believe that if we discuss these at our monthly meetings, we'll be able to realize and head off some of these problems before they happen and we'll be better teachers as a result of having faced the problems as a group.

September

The things that worked against us at the beginning did not dampen our spirits. The publicity did not go out as we had anticipated. The books we had ordered had not been received by the time we were ready to start the program, but start we did.

Registration was held according to plan. Because there was a lack of publicicty, we did not have the enrollment we expected; however, based on past experience, we knew that once the program got started the enrollment would pick up. Word of mouth is still one of the best means of advertising.

Each student was tested when s/he entered the program. An informal interview was held and approximately 15 to 20 minutes spent with each new student.

By the end of the first month, there was one class out of four that was low as far as enrollment is concerned. (We considered an enrollment of less than ten as low.

At our first monthly meeting, no one had any

overwhelming problems, but problems did exist. The most 2outstanding problem was one that we face year in and year out. There weren't enough students to warrant having three different levels, but there were students in level one who should have been in another classroom. The problem arises when you have students in level one who can't read or write and there are others in the same level who can do both, but who need practice in speaking. Is it feasible to have all of these students grouped together?

We were able to solve this problem to a degree by finding a really good volunteer teacher's aide. We managed to achieve this through one of the two local Senior Citizen's groups. It required more work on the part of the teacher. The aide had to be trained. Extra planning had to be done, but it was manageable. Later we were fortunate enough to get an additional teacher's aide who helped on a regular basis in the morning ESL classes.

The resolving of minor problems consisted of modifying lesson plans and a little ego boosting. We agreed that the first month had gone relatively well. Enrollment for the morning classes is still low. Perhaps because more and more people are having to work.

We had decided previously that the best way to set up the teaching aspect of the program was to teach in blocks. The first month, for example, the beginning classes would concentrate on introductions (including names of native countries), filling out information cards, numbers, colors and a list of 50 vocabulary words. The intermediates class would review introductions, filling out information cards, applying for military identification cards vs. civilian ID cards, reviewing emergency numbers and practice in responding to emergencies, and military vs. civilian jurisdication of authorities. This, we all agreed was what was needed. We agreed that there might be times when we would have to be flexible and provide something different than what the gneral plan called for, but that we could basically operate from a plan such as this.

In addition to the teaching blocks, teachers shared ideas of things that were working well in the classes. Some ideas/suggestions were the dialogue journal is advantageous to increase writing skills for intermediate students. Beginning students benefit from dictation sentences given by teachers as well as students. It's a wise idea for teachers to keep a journal of class activities for future reference.

OCTOBER

By the end of this month, things seemed to be going fairly smoothly. The classes were well established, enrollment in the morning classes had picked up a little and the text books had arrived and were being used.

Too early to determine the full value of the adopted text, the teachers had begun to form opinions about them.

Teachers have established good rapport in the classroom. Through classroom observations and individual meetings with the teachers, questions and problems have been kept to a minimum. Teachers liked the idea of written and oral evaluations.

Questions arose concerning class attendance. The primary question: Is there some way we can get those students who miss class too often to realize the importance of coming to class? Most have legitimate reasons for being absent, but too many absences puts them too far behind to catch up with the rest of the class, and it's unfair to those students who are present regularly to have to wait for the others who've been absent. Whose responsibility is it to let the teacher know when a student will be abse t? Is it the student's responsibility or should the teac call to find out why the student has been absent?

In a program such as ours (open entry/open ex. .), we agreed, it is important to have teacher follow-up when a student has been absent for more than two consecutive class meetings. Considering that the ESL students are shy about using the telephone, they will probably be reluctant to call, especially if they are beginning students. Nevertheless, the classroom teacher should stress that the student needs to take the responsibility of making that telephone call. That too, is a learning experience. It wouldn't hurt to devote class time to practice calling the teacher.

Another alternative is to have a policy that automatically drops a student from the roll if s/he is absent for three consecutive class meetings without having called. However, this policy should not even be mentioned if we know we don't really intend to follow through with it. We decided against using the policy. We did decide to remind the students every now and again of the importance of getting to class, and we would have a classroom session on telephoning to state reasons for absences.

* Enrollment for the evening classes (especially the beginning class) is rising rapidly.

* Question: Is there any way possible we could start another ESL class in the evening that would accommodate students just entering the program who are at the beginning level?

Ideas shared:

Mystery Guest - A visitor to the class. Someone from the community, who has been invited to come and talk with the students. Students try to guess the profession of the guest by asking pertinent questions.

Mystery Box - Students are invited to bring "mystery" items for the mystery box. They must answer questions posed by their classmates about the item. Classmates try to guess what the item is.

NOVEMBER

READING INSERVICE

AGENDA:

8:30 Sign in/ Name tags Coffee & Donuts Get acquainted

Since there may be new teachers attending this inservice, a few minutes will be spent on introductions. This can be done in any number of ways from giving self introductions to having reciprocal interviews and introductions.

9:00 There are three basic questions about reading that we'll be talking about today: What is Reading and why is it so important? How do people learn to read? How do we go about teaching those who haven't learned to read?

The format for this inservice will include informal group discussions based on activities that that will be provided, followed by discussion. Participants will be encouraged to interject relative ideas and comments. There will also be some time at the end of the session for questions and hopefully answers.

ACTIVITY 1

Rather than give you a long lecture on the answers to the questions raised about reading, it might be more productive to seek the answers to these questions together. In order to do this, I'll ask you to form small groups. (Assign groups based on the number of people attending.)
Now we're going to have a mini-contest. Please choose one person as the recorder for your group. (Paper and pencil provided if the group has none.) Now, make a list of all the things you have read this morning. (Small prizes may be given to the group with the largest amount of reading done today.)

DISCUSSION
So what does this tell you about the importance of reading? (Encourage input.)
What exactly is reading? If you had to write a definition, what are some of the things you would include? (Comments from participants.)
Look at what some theorists say about reading.

OVERHEAD

Frank Smith: READING IS GETTING THE MEANING FROM FROM WHAT IS BEING READ.

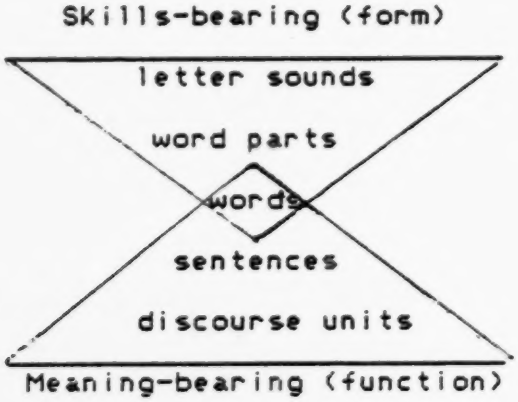
Roger Shuy: READING IS GETTING MEANING FROM THE PRINTED PAGE.

Delva Daines: COMPREHENSION IS THE END RESULT OF READING.

Yetta Goodman: READING IS AN ON-GOING, LONG DISTANCE CONVERSATION BETWEEN AUTHOR AND READER. IT IS A PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS ON THE PART OF THE READER.

9:30 So what do you have to know in order to read? This is what Roger Shuy (1980) says: Letter-sound correspondences carry no meaning per se. Some meaning bearing begins with word parts (prefixes, suffixes and grammatical inflections), but only minimally. Words bear meaning, but such meaning can be tricky; when it is looked at out of context (that is, in isolation rather than within the context of a sentence or discourse).
(Give an example: WIND [the wind - to wind].)
According to Shuy, the purpose of teaching decoding skills is to get beyond themselves as skills and to lead the learner as effectively and quickly as possible to greater and more efficient comprehension.

OVERHEAD



In contrast to Shuy, Frank Smith (1982) thinks we should use decoding skills as perhaps a last resort. Smith says we learn to read by reading and that for the most part too much time is spent on the teaching of skills that have very little or nothing at all to do with being a successful reader. Smith's theory is that we all have experiences and knowledge that we bring

with us to reading. He calls this "nonvisual information". The information that we get from print then, is "visual information". We use both for reading. Let me give you an example.

ACTIVITY 2

(The following words are put on the chalkboard:

octogenarian peripatetic sesquipedlianism)

How many people know the meaning of all three words? .....2 words? .....1 word?

Let's put these words in a sentence and see what happens.

(On chalkboard: Miss Jenkins, a peripatetic octogenarian, was often given to sesquipedalianism.)

Any comments? (Entertain guesses.)

Let's try a paragraph.

OVERHEAD

Miss Jenkins, a peripatetic octogenarian, was often given to sesquipedalianism whenever she wrote. She spent much of her 80 odd years travelling from one country to another. We never knew from which land, nativeor foreign, her letters were going to come. One week there would be a postmark from India; the next letter would come from Japan. We would pften make a game of mapping her travel route using the postmarks on her letters.

And what letters they were. The words in each letter would gather size like snowballs, and towards the end of her letter, Miss Jenkins had a habit of becoming downright sesquipedalian. We would inevitably have to consult the dictionary to get the full meaning of her message.

Do you have some idea of the meaning of the three words now? (Allow comments.)

How did you guess what the words mean? (Allow comments)

Just as the contextual clues helped you to get at the meanings of the unfamiliar words...(Your knowledge/ nonvisual information led you to make educated guesses about what you were reading. If I asked you to retell the passage, you could probably do that with little or

no difficulty.) ....would it not be wise then, to teach these strategies to those who are learning to read? What does all this tell you about reading? How do people learn to read? Can we make generalizations from this passage?
Consider these implications:

OVERHEAD

PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WORDS FROM CONTEXTUAL CUES. WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE IT.

PEOPLE DON'T LEARN TO READ BY LOOKING AT WORDS IN ISOLATION.

WHEN WE STUMBLE ON WORDS, WE DON'T GO BACK TO ACTUAL SOUNDS; WE USUALLY BREAK THE WORD INTO PARTS.

What would happen if you were asked to read paragraph after paragraph which contained sentences like that first one?
(Speak briefly about tunnel vision and its implications.)

Smith offers four characteristics of reading:

IT IS RURPOSEFUL

IT IS SELECTIVE

IT IS ANTICIPATORY

IT IS BASED ON COMPREHENSION

10:00 Considering these four characteristics, what would you do to help nonreaders become interested in reading?
(Allow comments.)

Let's do one final activity.

ACTIVITY 3

Give each group 3 short passages to read. (Included at the end of this text.) (Allow time for reading)
If you will, within your own groups, rank the passages according to how much you enjoyed reading them.
(Group recorders are given the tabulation sheets.)

How many people ranked passage

A as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

B as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

C as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

D as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

Tabulate the totals and put them on the chalkboard.

What does this tell us? (That reader interests vary.)

To get people interested in reading then, we must offer reading materials that are of interest to them. How can we know what their interests are? Ask them, or at least provide a variety of materials that will increase their vocabularies beginning with what they know-- the nonvisual-- plus a little beyond what they know. We should also spend more time on reading and less time on doing skill sheets.

Questions:

Suppose you have a student who is progressing at a faster rate then the others in your class? What do you do?

If you feel that a student is really comprehending what is being read rather easily, then I think that would be an indication that s/he needs more challenging material to read or that the type of reading s/he is doing is of particular interest to him/her. I would try material that is at a little higher level or a larger variety of material.

Were you implying earlier that there is no place for phonics in learning to read?

No, that's not what I meant to imply. I think people learn in different ways. Most people come to reading already knowing words ....the signs they see on the street and on TV, etc. What I am saying is that too often this nonvisual information is not even taken into consideration. Maybe we need to consider the options, all the options, as viable. Students can and do sight read. Why not use it to their advantage?

What about the correction of errors?

What about it? We all make what is called miscues. If an error is truly interfering with comprehension, the

student will probably catch it him/herself. I think it's best to let the student try to get at the meaning of what is being read. I think that's far more important. Don't you?

SMITH:

READING IS PURPOSEFUL

READING IS SELECTIVE

READING IS ANTICIPATORY

READING IS BASED ON COMPREHENSION

Passage A

TRUE! -NERVOUS- very, very dreadfully nervous I had been and am; but why will you say that I am mad? The disease had shrapened my senses - not destroyed - not dulled them. Above all was the sense of hearing acute. I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth. I heard many things in hell. How then, am I mad? Hearken! and observe how healthily - how calmly I can tell you the whole story.

It is impossible to say how first the idea entered my brain; but once conceived, it haunted me day and night. Object there was none. Passion there was none. I loved the old man. He had never wronged me. He had never given me insult. For his gold I had no desire. I think it was his eye! Yes, it was this! One of his eyes resembled that of a vulture - a pale blue eye, with a film over it. Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold; and so by degrees - very gradually - I made up my mind to take the life of the old man, and thus rid myself of the eye forever.

Edgar Allen Poe

Passage B

All blue jeans were ever meant to be were comfortable pants to work in or hang around the house in, Saturday morning. What in the world has happened to blue jeans?

Do we really have to go to Paris to get a pair of blue denim pants designed --- two legs, a fly and some belt loops? Who is this Sergio Velente anyway, and what's he done with pants that's so different?

I don't understand it. Everywhere you go these days, you're faced with the rear end of some pretty model posing in some unlikely position, trying to sell you blue jeans. They're on the backs of the buses everywhere... although I shouldn't think anyone who could pay for Jou Jou jeans would take a bus.

The ads stare down at you from billboards all over town. He loves her pants. She loves his pants. There's an awful lot of panting going on in those jean ads.

How come they wear so much below the waist and so little above it in some of the ads? I should think they'd get cold.

Andy Rooney

Passage C

Over a billion people in the world speak more than one language fluently. In the Philippines, for example, many people must speak three languages if they are to engage fully in their community's social affairs. They must speak the national language, Philippino; one of the eighty-seven local vernaculars; and English or Spanish. In small countries, such as the Netherlands or Israel, most school children are required to study at least one foreign lnaguage in school, and sometimes several. Most adults in the Netherlands speak German, French and English in addition to Dutch. Even in the United States, whose inhabitants are notoriously unconcerned about languages other than English, about 10% of the residents usually speak at least one language in addition to English in the course of their daily lives.Throughout much of the world, being able to speak at least two languages, and sometimes three or four, is necessary to function in society.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen

Passage D

Early in 1963, a young woman was being tested by Soviet scientists. They had heard about the young lady who could "see" with her fingertips. As any scientist knows, this is utter nonsense. But Roza Kuleshova gladly performed for them. She explained that she had discovered this unusual talent when she was 16 years old, after both her eyes were heavily bandaged following an accident in her home.

The scientists covered her eyes with an adhesive tape and foil, and even had her wear a large metal diving helmet. Without hesitation she read page after page in books and magazines through her fingertips. She described photographs in publications she had never seen before. She even described colors in pictures!

To "see" with her fingertips, the young woman moved them along the page an inch above the part she was

examining. She could also read and describe colors by putting her fingers on or well above the pages. But she found it easier when she didn't touch the material. Roza was able to describe scenes and people in great detail in glossy photos. The scientists agreed that Roza did indeed "see" with her fingertips, but they didn't know how she did it.

Critical Reading & Thinking

Tabulation sheet

How many people ranked passage

A as 1 _____ 2_____ 3_____

B as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

C as 1_____ 2_____ 3 _____

D as 1_____ 2_____ 3_____

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Monthly Meeting

Teachers show a marked air of confidence in what they're doing and in what is needed. They have reached a concensus that the adopted text is not the best text for these particular classes, but they're able to supplement other materials with the texts.

Good rapport (student/student, student/teacher and teacher/teacher) exists in all classes. The morning class now has an excellent volunteer aide (A former "Mystery Guest").

The end of the month staff meetings are greatly appreciated. Obviously we have formed a "Buddy" system among us and it's quite effective. Ideas and materials are shared freely including games, interesting dialogues, pictures, tests and other teacher-made materials. Each of us has taken advantage of the services of TRENDS in previewing and using material.

A new evening class was started after a 6 hour inservice and observation by the new teacher.

Evaluations for this and the other classes are all good. The interest, dedication and planning have all been a stabilizing force for the program.

Teachers agree the monthly meetings provide the opportunity for keeping the program's goals on an even keel while at the same time allowing flexibility on the part of the individual teacher.

The journals being used in the intermediate classes are proving successful. More writing and reading are being encouraged in the beginning classes.

All teachers except the newest member of the ESL faculty have attended the Reading inservice and an additional workshop. They have enjoyed both and feel the information was extremely valuable.

DECEMBER

On the 18th of this month we had a year end meeting rather than the usual monthly meeting. Teachers were given an overview of what we had done over the last four months. We were all astonished at the accomplishments made. The importance of keeping a journal was obvious.

We were not without problems, though. The newest evening class had not worked out well. The teacher had been absent due to illness and personal problems. Students were beginning to drop out. A decision was made to discontinue the class and to absorb the remaining students in other existing classes.

Discussion of goals for '86 was also a part of the agenda. We acknowledged the fact that publicity was lacking this year, but because we relied on others for that service, there was very little we could do about it. One suggestion was made to have inexpensive flyers made for distribution in the local area. We would need approval from the director. (Approval was given.)

Another problem we faced was that of attrition. We felt that we had done all that we could do to lower attrition, and although we've made progress over previous years, we felt that it still was not enough. We were still losing too many students. Our particular site does have a follow-up letter for those students who have dropped out, but few drop-outs return the letters.

In looking over the accomplishments of the past five months, we felt that we were keeping on target with the goals we had set in August. Most of us had attended all available workshops and inservices, had learned immensely from them, were continuing to establish good rapport with new and regular students, had managed nicely to incorporate knowledge and awareness of other cultures into the curriculum and had provided help in each student's quest for needed survival skills.

Teachers are convinced that for us "block" teaching is the key to staying on track. New "blocks" are decided on at the monthly meetings.

All of the teachers are now using mystery guests and the students really like it.

Next Inservice set for Feb. will be on Writing.

Announcements:
Evening ESL teacher aide nominated for Volunteer of the Year Award through local TV station. Letter sent.

January workshop, in which two members of our team will participate, sponsored by TEXTESOL.

Teachers were asked to start previewing materials for next year. Some books have already been sent by publishing companies.

Teachers all agreed that we would continue through the next five months in the same fashion that we had the last five months.

Questions to ponder over the holidays:

What texts do we want to use for next year? How can we improve the program? What kind of training can we look forward to over the summer months? Should we test at the end of the year and is so, how and when should we test?

JANUARY

With the arrival of the new year, there was new enthusiasm among the teachers and students alike. Classroom observations showed students actively engaged in conversations inside as well as outside classes. There was very little clustering in ethnic groups. Students intermingled with members the other ESL class. (Classes share a coffee pot.) Teachers used break times wisely, talking briefly with different students. Students applauded (physically) the accomplishments of their classmates.

January brought three very good workshops, two of which were attended by two members of the ESL team and three members attended the last one. Material from each was shared with those who could not attend. At the last workshop, two teachers demonstrated effective techniques which had been tested in the classroom. It marked a milestone for one of the teachers, since it was the first time she had mustered enough courage to do a presentation in front of peers. (It was done excellently.) The presentation consisted of using pictures to evoke, conversations and writing.

Since we had so many workshops scheduled in January, we did not have a monthly meeting, but there were individual conferences with each teacher. There were no significant problems.

FEBRUARY

INSERVICE
(WRITING)

Time frame: 8:30 - 10:30

(Use the same opening/introductions as previously presented in the Reading inservice.)

8:45 WHAT WRITING IS/ WHAT WRITING IS NOT

What do you say writing is?
(Allow time for comments. Explore the comments.)

WRITING IS NOT SPEECH WRITTEN DOWN.

Speech and writing are forms of language, but they are not identical. Think for a moment. Aren't there times you feel it's better to talk to a person in person rather than write a letter? Why is that?
(Allow comments.)

The more obvious differences between speech and writing are that writing is more permamnent than speech. We can refer back to a written piece. We can revise writing. Probably the most important difference between writing and speech is that in writing the producer of language is separated from the language produced and that allow objectivity on his/her part. Writing is tangible and can be examined in a way that speech cannot.
(Example of an ambiguous statement revised on the chalkboard.

9:05 THE TWO SIDES OF WRITING

ACTIVITY 1

Please write the following sentences as I dictate them to you.

Today is February 27th. It is exceptionally warm for this time of year.

Now write two sentences that explain why you came to this workshop.

What's the difference in the sentences? Would you consider both "writing"? (Allow comments.)

There are indeed two sides of writing. There is the transcribing side of writing and the composing side. Which is better for ESL students? (Allow comments.)

They both serve useful purposes. For the beginning student, transcribing dictation (words or sentences) improves his/ her listening skills as well as writing skills. For the intermediate or advanced student the same thing is true of transcribing, but if you're dictating sentences it provides examples of sentence structure in the English language.
(By the way, the teacher need not always do the dictating. You might want to use something called double dictation where two students take altermnating turns reading a sentence that his/her partner must transcribe. After the writing is completed the students check their own writing against the original sentence. For beginning students it is suggested that sentences be kept short or that only certain words in the sentence be eliminated.)
Transcribing requires less than composing. We pay attention to spelling, capitalization, punctuation and the accoutrements of making wiring legible.

Composing a written piece means we first must get an idea then we must choose words that will express the idea. Finally, we pay attention to grammar. Composition is an important goal in helping students learn to write.

Problems arise when there is conflict between composition and transcription. One of the hardest things for students (and the rest of us too) is to stop paying attention to the details of transcribing while we're trying to get the ideas down on paper.

Writing is a slow process, so we must learn to take it slowly. Don't expect too much from your students, especially from those who have no writing skills in any language. There's is a long, tedious journey, but the rewards are almost unbelievable.

9:35 WRITING AND READING TOGETHER
So how do we get students started in learning to write?

Let me ask some very important question. How many of you really enjoy writing? In school did you prefer essay questions or multiple choice items on a test? What kinds of things do you like to write? Did anyone have any kind of creative writing on the list of things you wrote today? (Allow time for comments on each question.)

Why write?
Modern technology has made us lazy as far as writing is concerned. In order to do things well, practice is usually required. If you have negative attitudes about writing, do you think they affect your classroom

presentation?

The writing process is not an easy one, but it is a rewarding one. Teachers should let their students see them writing. Students should learn that it's okay to struggle with words or thoughts... that it's all a part of the writing process.

Interest vs necessity

There are times when we need to write. Can someone name times when writing is necessary? (Allow comments.) There are also times when we are sparked to write, whether it is of a necessary nature or for the sheer pleasure of writing.
Do you ever read a piece of literature or see something wondrous and get the urge to put your thoughts on paper?) What stops you?

Students might be made aware of the need to write as well as writing for the pealsure of it.

We're all aware of the need to write. Let's take a look at writing for the joy of writing.

ACTIVITY 2

(The room is darkened. The light from an overhead projector is the only visible light.)

Now I'll ask all of you to just relax. Pretend you're asleep and you're dreaming.

(A tape recording of soft classical music is turned on and a pyrex dish filled with warm water is placed atop the glass plate on the overhead. Different colored drops of food coloring are slowly dropped into the water one at a time. [The warm water makes the food coloring swirl into a variety of shapes.] This happens for a few minutes before the music is turned off and the lights turnd on again.)
Now describe your dream on paper. (Allow time.)
May we hear some of them? (Allow time and comments.)
Did you enjoy writing this? Did you enjoy listening to the selections being read?
Often reading and writing go hand in hand. Wouldn't it be nice if we could have classroom filled with the writings of our students to be read and enjoyed and commented on by themselves and others?

Do you think your students could do something like this?

10:00 OTHER TECHNIQUES:

In the beginning: What do you do when a student knows little or nothing about the Roman alphabet?

The first thing s/he'll have to do is learn to write the alphabet. But as the alphabet is being learned the student can be taught that these letters mean something when we put them together. S/he can start writing words and sentences even before the writing of the entire alphabet is completed. Can you imagine the feeling of success that student will experience?

Dialogue Journals

For the more advanced students a good technique is the dialogue journal. This is a journal that is shared by the teacher and the student only. (..unless the teacher has permission to share an entry with others.) The journal is not corrected, just responded to. The non-corrrection of errors focuses on composition. Teachers might offer a corrected version in the response without explicitly stating, "This is what you should have written."

From pictures to ideas: Prewriting

Another technique that works well with beginning students is the use of pictures to evoke written responses from students.

10:15 Question/answer segment

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MONTHLY MEETING

Teachers reported students are making steady progress. The intermediate classes have become involved in giving short reports on their country's culture and their personal backgrounds. Students' birthdays have been noted all along. American customs were introduced for such occasions and questions concerning other cultures were raised, answered and accepted in the classes.

Current events via newspaper and magazine articles have been discussed as part of classroom work.

Since teachers have had difficulty in finding reading material for begining students, the teachers have been encouraged to write their own material. A commitment was made by each teacher to try to come up with at least two "pieces" of writing for beginning students by the end of the following month. The hope was that if each teacher and aide could devise two pieces, then there would be eight to twelve pieces of writing that teachers could use in the classroom.

Teachers were also advised to try earnestly to use student writing. Teachers had much more insight into the possibilities of finding/making reading materials through the teaching and practicing of writing skills.

Some texts have been previewed and teachers have been weighing texts for next year. Two texts have received teacher approval thus far.

MARCH

(Informal workshop on assessment in conjunction with monthly meeting.)

At the monthly meeting, teachers addressed the matter of assessment and how it should be achieved. We had discussed earlier the need for assessing the students at the end of the program. Now we were tasked with coming up with a good means of measuring each student's success.

We discussed at length the reality of what tests actually measures (We agreed tests measure no more than what that particular student did at that particular time and should not be the sole indicator of whether a student should be promoted or demoted.) We had used the HELP and John Tests at the onset of the program as a factor in placement. Could we possibly use these same tests as post tests? We could see the feasibilty of using the John Test for the beginning students, but we could see very little advantage in using the HELP Test as a post test. We decided to give the test in three parts to cover a substantial amount of subject matter and at the same time to make the students feel as comfortable as possible while taking the test. We spent hours discussing what kinds of items should be on the test. Student anxiety was uppermost in our minds as we deliberated.

We agreed that we should allow the students to know the results of the testing as soon as possible after giving the tests. Too, we decided to ask pertinent questions regarding the answers given by the students in going over the test with them. We would then glean more information regarding how that particular student tests.

Testing was not new to the students. All students, except those who were brand new to the program had taken tests throughout the program. Each teacher was asked to supply sample items after reviewing their planning books and previous tests. We agreed to have the items ready in a few weeks so that they could be culled for ambiguity, etc. by each of us in turn. We would then have a final copy of the test ready by the end of the following month.

Reports of student progress was good for this month. There was a minor problem due to a slight influx of students during the month and in determining what to do with them. This was evident more in the morning classes. The problem was partially resolved by using the volunteer aide to a greater extent and by giving the new students fifteen minute to one hour segments of instruction after class.

One member of the teaching team attended a workshop in a neighboring region. The teachers were informed of what was happening in that region. The workshop was reported to have been very informative and materials from that workshop were shared with co-workers.

For Next Month:

Test items to be reviewed should be in by the third week in April. Copies will be supplied each teacher.

APRIL
MONTHLY MEETING

This month we asked the students to evaluate the program. Surprisingly pleasurable were the written comments given by the students, especially those provided by the beginning students. This was FREE writing on their part. The feedback was valuable and will be reviewed before the program is started in the fall to set goals for the 1987 school term.

April was perhaps the busiest month yet. Planning end of year exercises, doing year end reports and trying to keep the program on target were all combined to create something a litlle less than havoc.

We also realized that we had approximately three weeks left in which we would have to test. Time was running out on us.

The tests were ready, having been designed by all the teachers with help from the aides and covering items from the blocks of teaching matched against the original objectives. There were oral, aural and written segments included in the test. Dates were set for the different segments to be given. Teachers agreed that if help would be needed on a particular segment (we surmised that some of us would need help with the oral portion of the test.) it would be provided by the rest of us.

We were all satisfied with the instrument. Now we would wait to see the results.

An additional item to be considered this month was the end of year program. In previous years we had cooperated with the rest of the site (GED and ABE staff) to hold a joint program at the end of the year. We had noticed that many of the ESL students did not attend those programs. We felt it was a for a combination of reasons... among them, time, guest speakers they could not understand and a feeling of discomfort. We decided to hold the program at the regularly scheduled class time. We would invite family members and friends to attend. (In both AM and PM classes, attendance at the e.o.y. program was at 95 %.)

MAY

The final month had arrived. Testing had been done. Certificates of achievement and appreciation had been presented. The year end program was successful. The students had said their goodbyes. We each had had time to reflect on the overall program. The only remaining tasks were to evaluate what we had done, evaluate the entire

program, and complete the year end reports for the Texas Education Agency.

At our final workshop, all ESL teachers and one of the two volunteer aides were present. We each gave a brief report on what we felt we'd accomplished in our individual classrooms. Specific questions were asked about the success of the program and the areas that were problematic. Here are the results.

QUESTION:
We tried a lot of new things this year as a result of the grant we received; what are your thoughts....were the innovations worthwhile?

Teacher A: The thing that I appreciated most of all was the fact that this year we had direction. In previous years, I was never sure of what I was doing or if what I was doing was what I should have been doing. Now I feel that we can set goals on a yearly basis and expect to accomplish them because they're realistic. I feel much more comfortable in this job.

Teacher B: I agree. Another thing that we did for the first time was the pretesting and post testing. I thought that was really beneficial. I know that I didn't always keep up with the pretesting as I should have, even though I knew it was beneficial. I'm going to do better at that next year. I really mean it.

Teacher C: The thing that I liked in addition to what was just mentioned was the feeling of security in knowing that we were all in this together. The buddy system really works. I always felt that I had someone to turn to when I needed help. Just knowing that made solving problems by myself much easier.

Teacher B: I don't know if this directly involves anything new that we did this year, but it seems we have had the best group of students this year than at any other time. Is this just my imagination or do the rest of you feel that way, too?

(* I'm not sure that these students were any different than other students we've had in the past, perhaps we felt that they were becuase WE were better organized.)

Teacher C: You know what else I liked? The meetings that we had. They really helped me to keep things in perspective. I can remember being so confused last year. I didn't experience that once this year.

QUESTION:
Could we have done this without a grant?

Teacher C: I don't think we could have. The grant allowed us the time and guidance that we needed to test some of these ideas, not to mention the added resource materials that we now have as a result of the grant. Having a guide to refer to in years to come will eliminate a lot of headaches for people coming into the program as well as for those who have been around for a while.

QUESTION:
What would you change if you could?

Teacher A: The open entry/open exit policy. I'd like to see us go on semesters or something like that. It's too hard to try to meet the needs of all the students who come in sporadically through the year. I know this will probably never change, but I think it's one of the main reasons for the attrition that we see.

Teacher B: I'd like to see us go back to having a site coordinator. I think the site coordinator is the glue that holds it all together. There were some problems on our campus this year that should never have happened. I think they happened because we had no site coordinator.

Teacher C: I'm not sure of how I'd go about making a change for what I'm about to say, but I'd like to see a more gentle transition take place when a student graduates from one level to the next. I think that transferring a student at some time during the year is a major adjustment that is extremely difficult for a lot of students. I wish there were some way we could make that easier for the student.

QUESTION:
What are some ways that you can make that transition easier?

Teacher B: I think the student realizes that there might be some difficulties when s/he transfers into another class, but I think that the difficulties are not insurmountable for most students. I think what is most important is that the student feels comfortable in the new class....or at least as comfortable as we can possibly make it for him/her.

QUESTION:
What do you do, Teacher C, when you get a new student?

Teacher C: Well, I start by introducing myself and then I ask the other students to introduce themselves. Usually if there's someone who speaks the new student's language, then the new classmate feels a little more at ease. I worry about those students who perhaps don't have another

representative from their country who can help them with the transition.

Teacher B:
But don't you think that it depends on the individual student? Some students are going to succeed regardless of what the new situation is simply because they're highly motivated. Don't you have a young man from Poland? Isn't he the only Pole in your class? Does he fit into the group?

Teacher C: Yes, you're right. I see what you mean. I guess I worry about the students a little too much.

(When you stop to consider it, aren't we, the teachers, the main ones who set the atmosphere of the class? If you feel good about the student coming in to the class, don't you think that this attitude will contribute to the rest of the class's attitude?)

Teacher C: I agree wioth you to a degree. I think we have to allow for personal differences. There are some students who just don't like other students.

(That may be true, but don't you think there are times when we have to say to ourselves; "I may not like the way you are, but I will try to accept the way you are , because it is a part of who you are."? And don't you think we should teach this to the students...this respect for other people and their differences?)

Teacher A: Yes, I think that's a big part of what we should be doing ....accepting cultural differences as well as personality differences. I'll remember that.

QUESTION:
Did you see any cultural conflicts?

Teacher C: Perhaps not so much cultural conflicts, but conflicts that stemmed from differences based on culture.

Teacher A: Yes, I think you're right. I remember one conflict that arose in the classroom between two people from the same ethnic background. I think, and I really can't be sure, that it stemmed from something that the particular culture held in high esteem and the student was deeply offended by a member of the same culture. Perhaps she wouldn't have been as offended if the remark had come from a member of another culture.

QUESTION:
That brings up another question. How much responsibility do the students have?

Teacher C: I've improved in that area since last year. Last year I did everything for the students...I treated them just like children. This year I was determined that I would no longer do that. I like it a lot better, but I'm still not letting tthem take enough responsibility.

Teacher B: I think that as time goes by you will. It took a long time for me to let go. I think it's important for them to realize that they need responsibility. Isn't that a part of survival skills?

Teacher A: I think by giving students responsibility we provide them with a sense of importance and self worth, don't you think?

QUESTION:
What do you see for the future of ESL as a direct result of this year's program?

Teacher C: One thing is certain. There will be better placement of students because of the pretesting and informal interview. More importantly, I think the program will be stable as a result of this year's accomplishments. I wish we had this five years ago.

Teacher A: I think we're all appreciative of what we now have. The foundation has been laid, now we must see to it that the program remains intact and we'll build on what we have . I think we're off to a fantastic start.

QUESTION:
How has this year's program helped you as an individual?

Teacher A: It gave me ...or helped me to gain ... the confidence that I needed to do an effective job. I was more in tune with what was going on, with what the students needed and how to provide for those needs.

Teacher B: Attending the workshops helped me to see that there are other sites struggling just as much or more than what we were. I felt saddened that more people didn't take advantage of the inservices and workshops that were offered. They always helped me tremendously. I don't feel as shaky about teaching as I did before. After participating in the workshops, I began to feel the value of what we're doing here.

Teacher C: I feel that we've worked well as a group and that was a blessing for me. In my everyday job, I have a difficult time working with some of my co-workers. Here I don't have to worry about that. Everyone has been so supportive. It's like having your own cheering squad and you just know you're going to succeed, because everyone is going to see to it that you do.

Teacher B: This may have been a minor thing to everyone else, but I think the finest thing I received this year was a lesson plan book. I never realized what a gem this is. Now I can go back through the book, read my notations, look at some of the things that worked, toss out the things that didn't work....

Teacher A: Not really toss out plans that didn't work. You might want to revise the plan and try it out again. You just never know....what doesn't work with one group may work beautifully with another.

Volunteer A: I have always wanted to teach. I think the program did more for me than I did for it. Those students were like my family. I cherished the time I spent in the classroom with them. I have given up most of my other activities so that I could devote more time to the program. It feels like I've found a home. I feel good when I'm there and I feel needed. That's really important for me.

Volunteer B: (Asked on a separate occasion) Even though I felt I contributed very little to the program, I always felt the students were always so appreciative of everything they received. It made me feel worthwhile. Another thing that I found delightful was that when the students would see me outside the class, they always appeared to be delighted that they bumped into me. That's really a good feeling. I cannot tell you how much I have learned from them. This experience has provided me with so much patience, I'm astounded. It's also given me insight into the dilemmas that some people face on a daily basis. I count my blessings far more often now.

FINAL COMMENT:

When we took on this project, we took it on as a team. My deepest appreciation goes to the people who gave untiringly of their time and effort to make this happen. Those people are the teachers: Mary Walls and Jennifer Felty, Beginning ESL teachers; Susan Talbert, Intermediate/Advanced ESL teacher and Jeannette North and Evelyn Walker, our volunteer aides.

The coop director, Maggie Cunningham, provided encouragement and support throughout the year.

Members of the community who served as mystery guests, permitted us to post publicity in their establishments, gave us materials and supported the program all have a part in this endeavor. We are grateful.

What we witnessed, I believe, is what happens when there is sound purpose and direction to a program backed by knowledgeable, dedicated people. This project contained all of those ingredients. The result is a better program, better educated teachers (This year saw more teachers attending workshops and inservices than ever before.) and better educated students. In the process of incorporating culture in the curriculum, the teachers learned as much as the students of other cultures and customs.

Since the school year has ended two faculty members have taken a week long workshop in San Antonio, one faculty member is enrolled in the summer instutute at SWTSU in the hopes of obtaining an ESL endorsement and one faculty member will take the week long workshop at Texas A&I in August.

We were not without problems this past year; however, because we had made a commitment to make this project work, we were able to iron out the difficulties.

We sincerely hope that this guide will be beneficial for those who share these or similar dilemmas, as well as those who are just beginning to teach in an ESL or adult education program.

It has indeed been a labor of love.

Janice M. Waddy

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